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OXCART

BYE 086-68  
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21 May 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with Chairman Rivers and Chief Counsel Blandford  
of House Armed Services Committee re the Cancellation  
of OXCART

1. Yesterday I called Mr. Blandford to arrange for Chairman Rivers to be informed on the above matter and to ask Mr. Blandford if he could make a date for us to talk to the Chairman. He suggested that I visit his office at 0715 this morning and we could discuss it and then decide how best to inform the Chairman.



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3. The Chairman then made a few remarks about the Agency's failure to keep him informed, remarking that henceforth he would expect to be promptly informed of whatever he should know about.

4. Blandford explained that I was there to talk about the cancellation of OXCART. The Chairman commented that he didn't have time to "listen to a lot of stuff" about OXCART, but he wanted to know why it was being suddenly cancelled. I said I understood this was primarily because of budgetary considerations.



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5. The Chairman asked if an OXCART vehicle had ever been shot down. I said no, but that one had been washed out in a training accident.

6. In response to further questions by the Chairman and Blandford, I mentioned the numbers of OXCART missions and the high percent of success; the annual cost of the program, [REDACTED] the fact that by taking account of the savings accomplished by mothballing eight SR 71's, [REDACTED]

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I also briefly mentioned the problems involved in mothballing.

7. The Chairman asked if the program was still considered highly classified. I said it was indeed. He said "you mean nobody knows CIA is running this?" I said I hoped not and was unaware of any serious leaks. The Chairman commented that "if the Air Force takes it over everybody will hear about it soon enough," adding that he was much concerned about cancellation of OXCART and was seriously considering "bringing the problem into the open." I repeated that we considered the project very sensitive. The Chairman said he would take "full responsibility" regarding any security problems.

8. The Chairman directed that we prepare a "complete paper" regarding the history and performance of OXCART, and of its termination. He said this paper should be given to Blandford who would keep it in his personal safe where it would be available for reference so that "we won't have to rely on anybody's memory."

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10. In connection with the Chairman's complaint about "not being kept informed", it is worth noting that an officer from DIA (usually [REDACTED] [REDACTED] apparently calls on the Chairman every morning at 0730 to show him a copy of the DIA daily bulletin and brief him on current developments.

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JOHN M. MAURY  
Legislative Counsel

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